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publication of the "Essays and Reviews," was confined to the fixed stipend of forty pounds a year, which was assigned to the professorship by Henry VIII. The North American Review, which then represented the conservative Unitarianism of Harvard University, assailed the volume under the title of "The Oxford Clergymen's Attack on Christianity." The more sober judgment of England on this almost forgotten controversy may be seen in the facts that the editor of the "Essays and Reviews," and the writer of the leading essay, is now the Right Rev. Frederick Temple, D. D., Lord Bishop of London, and that no man ever held a more secure or more exalted position in the Church of England than Dr. Jowett in his later years.

Dr. Jowett was made a Foreign Honorary Member of the Academy, May 27, 1873.

1894.

WILLIAM W. GOODWIN.

CHARLES MERIVALE.

THE historian of the Romans under the Empire died in December last. He was born in 1808, and was therefore in his eighty-fifth year at the time of his death. The leading facts of his long life may be stated briefly. He was educated at the University of Cambridge, where he received the Bachelor's degree in 1830. From 1838 to 1840 he was one of the Preachers to the University, and in 1861 was Hulsean Lecturer. He was Rector of Lawford in Essex County from 1848 to 1869. During the last six years of this period he was Chaplain to the Speaker of the House of Commons. In 1864, and again in 1865, he was chosen to deliver the Boyle Lecture at Whitehall. In 1869 he was made Dean of Ely. This last position he held till his death. He was elected a Foreign Honorary Member of our Academy, May 24, 1870.

Dean Merivale belonged to a literary family, his father, his brother, and his nephew being authors of reputation. He was himself an author on an extensive scale. In addition to lectures and sermons published from time to time, and some critical work as editor of Latin texts, he published the following historical works : —

A General History of Rome. 1 volume.

The Fall of the Roman Republic ; — a Short History of the Last Century of the Commonwealth.

The Roman Triumvirates. 1 volume.

History of the Romans under the Empire. 8 volumes.

The Continental Teutons. Conversion of the West.

The Conversion of the Roman Empire. (Boyle Lecture for 1864.)

The Conversion of the Northern Nations. (Boyle Lecture for 1865.)

Also the following works of a non-historical character : —

Open Fellowships : a Plea for submitting College Fellowships to University Competition.

Homer's *Iliad* in English rhymed verse.

The titles of these works show at a glance the direction of Dr. Merivale's activity as a student and writer. The period of the transition from the ancient to the mediæval world had for him an irresistible attraction. Both his historical and his religious instincts found there subjects on which they could have ample play. It was indeed a period of momentous issues, of large and lasting transformations, — a period in which every political and religious institution of the civilized world seemed more than once to be at the point of destruction. An old order was passing away amid throes and disasters ; a new order was painfully struggling into being. The Republic had failed to develop its constitution in harmony with the position its conquests had given it. The meeting of the Roman citizens in their centuries and tribes answered passably as the sovereign power, while Rome's dominion was limited to her own neighborhood. When her arms had carried her sway over the best portions of three continents, her city organization became simply and absurdly impossible as a constitution for so great a territory and such a multitude of subjects. The difficulties that modern England has on her hands, owing to the growth of her dependencies, are as nothing in comparison with those that confronted the Roman Republic. For the English have a representative Parliament, in which, when the English and their colonial fellow subjects agree in desiring it, colonial representatives may take their seats side by side with the members for the three kingdoms. But Rome had no representative body. The citizens who lived in Gaul, or in Asia Minor, could make their voice felt in the government only by going to Rome to vote. The world-wide Republic, organized as a city, was unable or unwilling to recognize its new position. It had ceased to be Roman when it became the civilized world. It could not remain a republic, for the elements of its population were too heterogeneous and scattered to agree in anything. The ancient world of city constitutions had reached its term.

The period of Dean Merivale's studies covers the transformation of the Republic into the Empire. The same period includes also the early stages of that other historical movement which has so deeply

affected the motives, hopes, and behavior of civilized men. His chief work, the "History of the Romans under the Empire," begins with the struggles that marked the fall of the Republic, and carries the story on to the death of Marcus Aurelius. It covers, therefore, nearly two centuries of Christian history,—the two centuries in which the new religion had its hardest contest with the superstitions and the philosophies it came to supplant.

Strange to say, at the time when Dr. Merivale began his work, this great period was without adequate historical treatment in English. Arnold did not come down so far, and Gibbon took up the story after this period was passed. Even now it would be difficult, apart from Dean Merivale's own work, to name any extensive and authoritative English treatise on the period. Doubtless one of the reasons why other writers have avoided the time is that which constituted one of its attractions for Dr. Merivale. The sources are so varied and so copious that the man who undertakes to master them has great need of courage. No other period of ancient or mediæval history has anything like the same bulk of material to be read and sifted. In fact, one has to come down to comparatively recent times to find sources rivalling those of this period in variety and volume.

How far Dean Merivale has succeeded in making the most of this copious material, I shall not be so presumptuous as to attempt to pronounce. Some qualities of his work are obvious on the face of it. He is admitted on all hands to be minutely accurate as to his facts. This, though not perhaps the very highest quality of an historian, is at least one of the highest. It is much to know that your author states nothing as a fact without full and adequate authority; that, when there is a conflict of testimony, or a question which the sources do not clearly settle, he does not allow his imagination to supply, even by ingenious hypothesis, the defects of his material. Herein lies, as it seems to me, Dean Merivale's most striking characteristic as an historian. He has never, so far as I know, been caught in a slip as to the facts of a matter. Every page of his history bears evidence of the immense diligence and patience with which he compared and sifted the mass of original authorities on each topic.

But it may be doubted whether his history will ever be widely popular. The very excellence of which I have spoken is, for the general reader, not far removed from a defect. Most people who profess to read history demand, I suspect, more of literary and philosophic sauce than is offered in Dean Merivale's pages. He never aspires to what is commonly called eloquence. He has no burning denuncia-

tions, no glowing eulogies, no highly wrought descriptions of scenes or of characters. His anxiety seems rather to have been to be just, — to omit nothing essential, and to exaggerate nothing. In this spirit he found it necessary to point out some redeeming bits of white in the blackness of the bad Emperors whose doings he had to rehearse. Even Domitian finds, in his narrative, some mitigating touches in abatement of the deep infamy to which his name has been commonly assigned. This quality in Dean Merivale's work will not commend it to the taste of those who want black to be black and white white.

Again, his literary style is not marked by vivacity and polish. On the contrary, it is often cumbrous and heavy. It strikes one as the style of a man who was fonder of Latin literature than of English. The matter-of-fact way of looking at things, as well as the forms of expression and the structure of the sentences, are all suggestive of the Latin writers whose works must have been the author's daily bread for many a year.

Those who turn to history for relaxation or amusement will not be likely to find the History of the Romans under the Empire just what they desire. On the other hand, the scholarly few who wish above all things to know the exact truth, so far as it can be known, will always think of the late Dean of Ely with affectionate admiration; for he was himself a scholar to the tips of his fingers. He seems to have loved the dry, clear light of accurate scholarship with his whole heart. He has been called the "last of the great scholarly Deans." The words, we must hope, are not prophetic. The Established Church that finds room for such as he in its highest positions has something to be said in its defence. It can never be narrow or sectarian. If the new activity of the Church of England means that it has no longer room for great scholarly Deans, the world will have cause for looking on the change with some mixture of regret.

1894.

S. M. MACVANE.

The Academy has received an accession of three Resident Fellows, three Associate Fellows, and one Foreign Honorary Member.

The Roll of the Academy, corrected to date, includes the names of 190 Fellows, 98 Associate Fellows, and 68 Foreign Honorary Members.

MAY 9, 1894.